



DIACONATE COUNCIL

Archdiocese of Chicago

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Minutes of Council Meeting of Saturday, November 13, 2010

The Diaconate Council of the Archdiocese of Chicago met on Saturday, November 13, 2010 at 9:12 AM. The meeting began with morning community prayer led by David Kalina. We prayed especially for John Lukas who is praying for a complete recovery from his returning cancer. After prayer, a roll call of the membership was taken.

I. Roll Call of the members. The following members indicated were present:

Executive members, William Stearns, Chairman, George Kashmar, Vice-Chairman, Sal Lema, Secretary, Charles McFarland, Treasurer, and David Egan, Chair Emeritus.

VDC's present were: Paul Spalla, Jose Vazquez, Giulo Camerini, Joseph Truesdale, and Dan Ragonese.

DDC's present were: Stephen Stecker, Chick O'Leary, Dan Welter, Frank Beil, Juan Gonzalez, William Pouncy, Chris Virruso, John Gaughan, Ignacio Alvarez.

Other members present were: Pedro Sedano, Hispanic community and Margaret Colgan and Peggy Virruso, representing the wives of the Diaconate Community.

Absent were: J. Lucas, J. LaFleur, D. Wagner, R. Loman, L. Rybicki, John Lorbach, U. Munoz, E. O'Leary, A. Lopez, R. Silva, J. Pineda, T. Coffey, R. Voytas, J. Dieters, T. Bartholomew, G. Bartos, J. Cook, and T. Knetl.

22 members being present, a quorum existed.

Also present, Father Michael Ahlstrom, vicar, and Dennis Colgan, associate director.

Guests: The chairman recognizes Deacons Dave Kalina, Diaconate Formation Program, and Tony Coco, Pastoral Council Representative.

SECRETARY NOTE:

The following members have missed three consecutive meetings:

DDC's:

Vicariate 1 A, Joseph LaFleur; 1B, David Wagner, 1E, Lawrence Rybicki

Vicariate 2F, Edward O'Leary

Vicariate 6A&B, John Cook.

II. Approval of Minutes of September 11, 2010

Hearing that a quorum was present, Chairman Bill Stearns called for a review and acceptance of the minutes of the previous meeting held on September 11, 2010. After review

and changes, motion was made by Dan Welter and seconded by Marge Colgan to approve the minutes with the changes. By voice vote, the motion was carried unanimously.

III. Treasurers Report, Charles McFarland, Treasurer

As of August 31, 2010 the bank balance was \$40,461.89. Since then credits and disbursements to the account leave a current balance as of October 31, 2010 of \$45,770.31. Checks not cleared as of October 31, 2010 total \$279.38.

1. **Archdiocesan Bank CD Values as of October 29, 2010.** Treasurer McFarland stated that the monies held by the Archdiocesan bank are as follows: \$42,070.05 in a 90 day CD at 1% interest, \$96,832.56 in a 12 month CD at 1.70% interest.
2. **The Saint Francis Day Dinner Income and Expense Statement**
Treasurer McFarland reported that total Income \$36,210, Expenses \$12,152.41, and net profit was \$24,057.
3. \$667.00 was received for memorials from those using the Deacon Memorial Cards during the period January 1, 2010 through October 31, 2010.
4. Treasurer McFarland has asked that an ad for deacon memorials be placed in the current and all subsequent issues of the Flame.
5. Memorial cards should be available at all deacon events.
6. \$0.00 Mutual Aid Checks were received during the period of July 1, 2010 to September 30, 2010.
7. \$597.51 Deacons Hot Meals for the Poor Balance as of October 31, 2010.
8. **Motion to accept Treasurer's report.** A motion to accept the treasurer's report was made by Jose Vazquez and seconded by Paul Spalla. By voice vote, the motion was carried by a vote of all the members present.

IV. Deacon Bob Puhala response to our letter- Sal Lema

Per the Council's request, Secretary, Sal Lema sent a letter on behalf of the council to the DFP director, Deacon Bob Puhala. Receiving a response, Sal was asked to read both the letter that he sent and the response that he received. Discussion about the response ensued. Fr. Mike stated that he would initiate a conversation with Fr. Thomas Baima about Bob's letter referring to credit given. He would also pursue the establishment of an advisory board for the Diaconate Formation Program. He commented that some pastors expressed concern about what type of recognition is given. Marge Colgan of the women of the Diaconate reported that the women who met recently felt that the directive was a dead issue. An Hispanic council member stated that the DFP does not share with the Spanish Program at all. Chairman Stearns ended the discussion by promising to keep this directive and our concerns prominent.

V. Archdiocesan Pastoral Council- Tony Coco

Representative Coco presented four questions that the Cardinal is asking about for the next four months. Council members that have concrete ideas are asked to send their ideas to Rita Kattner or Barbara Croker of the Archdiocesan office for Councils.

VI. Chairman Report William Stearns

Chairman Stearns reported that the Policy and Procedures manual was going along well. The members of the committee consisting of, Father Mike, Denis Colgan, Dan Welter and Bill Stearns continue to meet at the Archdiocesan office downtown. They hope to have the book completed by Christmas.

1. **St. Francis Day Dinner**

Chairman Stearns reported that this year's event netted \$1900 less in profit than previous years. The basket raffle did better than the live auction. Fr. Mike added that since the majority of deacons do not have disposable income, the live auction did not do as well. Secretary, Sal Lema expressed his thanks to Ron Morowczynski, Andy Beierwaltes and Kevin Hill for their work. Chairman Stearns requested that letter of thanks be sent to the three on behalf of the council. Next year, Andy Beierwaltes will chair and Ron Morowczynski will assist him. If anyone is interested in helping they should contact either Andy or Ron.

2. **Mutual Aid assistance**

The Executive council raised the mutual aid amount per occurrence to \$1,000 from \$500. A question was asked by Joe Truesdale if the council has a budget that it works off of. Treasurer McFarland responded to his question by stating that in the past there were several checking accounts for each specific item. When an account ran dry money was added. Now there is just one account (plus the money market funds held with the archdiocesan bank) where the money is kept and used when needed. Additional discussion arose on how the original money that was bequeathed was to be used. Chairman Streams commented that we practice good stewardship with these funds. In the past three years we have given over \$5,000 in mutual aid requests. The intent is to help people.

3. **Mutual Aid Guidelines and Request Form**

Chairman Stearns reviewed new guidelines on how the Mutual Aid Fund will be administered in the future. Vice Chairman, George Kashmar will now have the responsibility of contacting the person asking for request, gathering the information needed and then sharing that information with the executive committee, who will make the final decision. All information will be held in strictest confidence.

In reviewing the guidelines and request form, members addressed their concerns and added suggestions that will be implemented in the forms completion.

4. **Considerations for Ministry**

Chairman Streams brought up three questions on items presently written in the diaconal policy and procedures manual. They are:

- a. Distance and travel time shall be considered in reassignment.
- b. As a norm, Deacons should have one weekend each month free of any parish responsibilities, including liturgical service. This weekend should be utilized in a Sabbath manner; worship with one's family, attending to family relationships and activities, spiritual renewal, rest and recreation.
- c. If a Deacon is assigned to a parish other than that in which his family worships, he should not be engaged in the liturgical ministry of that parish except for special occasions or by individual invitation.

By a show of hands members favored these statements but wished item B referring to one weekend off of ministry each month to be listed as a *suggestive* element rather than a *normative*. Joe Truesdale commented that since we hear from the Presbyteral Council who shares with us what they are doing, should not we ask them about this item to get their input as well? Agreeing, the Council asked Paul Spalla who attends the Presbyteral Council meetings as our representative to present these changes and ascertain their comments.

5. Chemical Dependency

Chairman Stearns stated that a chemical dependency assistance program is needed. He is looking for names within our community (deacons or wives) of qualified clinicians who can be called upon to help when needed.

VII. Personnel Board, Dan Welter, Chairman

Dan Welter discussed the progress made with the personnel board concerning the reassignment process. He stated by saying that presently the reassignment of deacons would be after a deacon has served ten years in an assignment as long as the deacon was under 60 years of age. That formula greatly limits the number of deacons available. Welter led a discussion showing comparisons on raising the age requirement from 60 to 63 or 65 years of age. With a show of hands, the council favored the age limit being raised to 65. Many other factors will determine whether a deacon will be asked to move or not, for example if there is only one deacon in the parish, or if the language needs of the parish are being fulfilled. He reviewed the reassignment process that begins with a dialog during the 9th year of your present assignment. During the discussion council members added positive insight that will be considered for the process. The council membership thanked Dan Welter for his work.

VIII. Vicar's Report, Fr. Mike Ahlstrom

1. With sadness Fr. Mike accepted the resignation of John Lucas as VDC for Vicariate I.
2. Fr. Mike called on VDC's and DDC's to contact any new pastors in their deaneries. DDC's are to call each deacon every six months. He asked for a brief report on how these contacts went.
3. Fr. Mike, along with Dan Welter, Carol Walters, (director of lay ecclesial ministers) have been collaborating on a program to enlighten international priests who are now becoming pastors or parish administrators and who have not had experience with deacons. They recently had a meeting with Cardinal George who approved of their efforts. Improved communication and collaboration will be the expected result.
4. The recent St. Stephen Symposium had the worst turnout of the community that we have ever seen! It was thought that having presenters from the diaconate community would garner a big draw. That was not the case. Anyone with insights as to why our turnout was so dismal is to contact Fr. Mike.
5. On March 12, 2011 we will have our one-day Convocation at Concordia. The topic will be the translation of the new Roman Missal. Fr. Mike expects all our deacons to be present for this event. Deacons and wives will be the first ones parishioners will turn to with their concerns and to seek understanding.
6. In January, we will begin our preparation for the 2012 overnight convocation. It has been suggested that Matt Kelly give the keynote. Many copies of his book are still available at the office. Call Fr. Mike if you are interested in some.
7. On November 10th, Fr. Mike met with the black deacons and their wives. One issue that was discussed is the need for more black men to enter into formation. Concerning the DFP's financial crush, many parishes are having trouble coming up with their share of the tuition. We sincerely hope that we are not turning candidates away for lack of money to pay for their formation.

IX. Report from the associate director, Denis Colgan

1. The ID system at the symposium didn't work as well as they intended it to. ID's can be retaken at the next event.
2. **Preaching Workshop- January 15, 2011**
Preaching workshop to be held at Our Lady of Pompei. Fr. Fragomeni will present this workshop for the Lent and Easter seasons. To register, call the diaconate office.
3. **Treasures of the Triduum- January 21, 2011.**
A one day workshop will be held January 21, 2011 with Fr. Douglas Martis and Fr. Michael Fuller. It will unveil the rich theology of the church's Liturgical year. Register online at www.liturgicalinstitute.org.
4. **Convocation- March 12, 2011**
The convocation will be held at Concordia University, River Forest. Guest Speaker will be Todd Williamson from the Office of Divine Worship. The presentation will be a thorough review on the use of the New Third Edition of the Roman Missal.
5. **Catholic Men's Conference- March 19, 2011**
The Catholic Men's Conference will be held March 19, 2011 at the Oak Brook Marriot. Fee is \$45 for the day which includes lunch. For more information contact the Office for Evangelization at www.hopingforth.org.

X. Reports of VDC's and DDC's

1. Vicariate I No Report.

Vice Chair George Kashmar will be in discussion with the vicariate DDC's to resolve their absentee status.

2. Vicariate II Paul Spalla

Paul reported that there was a good turnout of deacons and wives for their annual Mass and Dinner held on Columbus Day. Their continuing education with Chick O'Leary went well. Two men made moves to other parishes thanks to the help of Dan Welter. Bishop Kane is interested in the transfers.

3. Vicariate III Jose Vazquez

Vicariate four is meeting with their bishop on December 4th. On Friday, November 11th, they came together to celebrate Our Lady of Providence, the patron saint of Mexico. The Puerto Rican community enjoyed it as well.

4. Vicariate IV Giulo Camerini

Tom Coffey's (DDC 4E) position has not been filled as yet. A volunteer is being sought.

5. Vicariate V Joseph Truesdale

Joe reported that the Vicariate had an excellent turnout for the farewell Mass of Archbishop Gustavo at St. Rita High School. Fr. Edward Upton was appointed by the Cardinal as the interim Vicar until a new bishop is appointed.

The vicariate held a Mass and Dinner on Tuesday, November 2nd. He thanked Fr. Mike for his attendance. Rich Voytas is still considering his appointment as DDC of Deanery B. He believes Deanery A is switching to another vicariate.

6. Vicariate VI Dan Ragonese

Dan reported that the vicariate is planning their annual meeting with Bishop Perry. Bishop Perry is working on the cause for canonization of Father Augustus Tolton.

7. Black Deacons, Hispanic Deacons and Representatives at large.

- a. Black Deacons** met with Fr. Mike. They discussed scheduling a date for next year's Beach Prayer Service; Catholics for non-violence meeting that was held November 17, 2010; Healing the Land Prayer Service, February 4, 2011; Parish Leadership Day, February 26, 2011; Peacemaking in a Culture of Violence, March 1-4, 2011; Lenten Vespers Service For Peace, April 1, 2011; End of School Rally, May, 24, 2011; and Sunrise Prayer Service, date yet to be determined.
- b. Hispanic Deacons** are planning a retreat in March with Fr. Fragomeni as their retreat director.
- c. Women of the Diaconate.** Nine ladies met on November 10th. They discussed the new directives, but felt it was of no consequence. The women stated that the directives from the DFP have changed their role; many felt that they were not wanted.

XI. Old Business

- 1. St. Lawrence Day Chairman** was to be obtained from Vicariate V. Joe Truesdale stated he does not have a chairman as yet and perhaps he will have to take it.
- 2. Presbyteral Council- Paul Spalla Representative**

Paul stated that at the November 8th Presbyteral Council meeting, a lengthy discussion ensued with Deacon Bob Puhala and his team regarding the new directive and implementation of diaconate training and formation.

3. **Association of Priests Dennis Colgan**

Dennis has requested for someone else to take this chair. Some names were discussed and will be asked to replace him.

XII. New Business

Hispanic Deacons stated that their annual convention will be held this year at the Embassy Suites in Chicago. They asked that the council once again assist by helping to defer the costs of the speakers and preparation needed for the weekend. A motion to that effect was made by Joseph Truesdale and seconded by Peggy Virruso. After discussion, a motion was made by Dan Welter to defer the motion to the Executive Committee who on the council's behalf would make a prudent decision. By a voice vote, the motion carried.

XIII. Next Meeting

Next meeting will held January 8, 2011 at 9:15 AM at the Diaconate office. Note that the following meeting after the January meeting will be held on March 5, 2011 rather than the second Saturday, due to a conflict in events.

XIV. Motion to Adjourn and Closing Prayer

With no further business to come before the council membership a motion to adjourn was made by Dan Welter and seconded by Marge Colgan. By voice vote, the motion carried. After a closing prayer was invoked by Fr. Mike Ahlstrom, the meeting adjourned at 11:55 AM.

Respectively submitted,

Sal Lema,
Secretary